On page 13, line 4, after the word "can" insert the word --be--.

On page 13, line 13, change "substitue" to --substitutes--.

On page 13, line 31, change "transciptional" to --transcriptional--.

On page 13, line 35, delete the phrase "removed by".

On page 14, line 16, change "accordand" to --accordance--.

On page 21, line 37, change "phlasmid" to --plasmid--.

On page 24, line 12, delete the word "how?".

In the claims:

12. (Amended) A method of obtaining an alkalophilic *Bacillus* strain having no detectable extracellular high alkaline protease, said method comprising:

transforming an alkalophilic *Bacillus* strain with a cloning vector comprising the 5' and the 3' flanking regions but not the coding region of a gene coding for the high alkaline protease and encoding a replication function, wherein a sufficient amount of said flanking regions is present to provide for homologous recombination with an indigenous gene coding for the high alkaline protease whereby transformants are obtained;

growing said transformants under conditions whereby the replication function encoded by said vector is inactivated; and

isolating transformants identified as having no detectable extracellular high alkaline protease.

14. (Amended) An alkalophilic *Bacillus* strain producing a mutant high alkaline protease [exhibiting

altered protease activity and] which is substantially free of expression product of an indigenous extracellular alkaline protease gene, wherein said strain has been obtained by transforming an alkalophilic *Bacillus* strain having no detectable indigenous extracellular high alkaline protease obtained by the method according to Claim 12 [or 13], 13 or 27 with a plasmid expression vector comprising ~~the mutant high alkaline protease gene.~~

15. (Amended) ~~The~~ *Bacillus* strain according to Claim 14, wherein said [mutant] alkalophilic *Bacillus* strain is a mutant of *Bacillus* novo species PB92 or a derivative thereof.

Please cancel Claim 17.

23. (Amended) A method for production of a mutated high alkaline protease exhibiting altered protease activity and substantially free of indigenous extracellular high alkaline protease, said method comprising:

growing an alkalophilic *Bacillus* strain host substantially incapable of reversion and having no detectable indigenous extracellular protease as a result of deletion of the gene for indigenous extracellular protease transformed with an expression cassette providing for expression of a said mutant high alkaline protease in said host, whereby said mutant high alkaline protease is produced.

24. (Amended) A method for preparing a detergent composition, which comprises the step of combining a detergent composition with, as an active ingredient, one or more mutant forms of a high alkaline protease exhibiting altered protease activity prepared according to the method of Claim 23.

25. (Amended) A method for processing laundry, which comprises the step of contacting said laundry with a detergent composition comprising as an active ingredient one or more mutant forms of a high alkaline protease exhibiting altered protease activity prepared according to the method of Claim 23.

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26. (Amended) A method for production of a mutated high alkaline protease exhibiting altered protease activity and substantially free of indigenous extracellular protease, said method comprising:

growing an asporogenous *Bacillus* strain host having a reduced indigenous extracellular protease level as a result of deletion of the gene for said indigenous extracellular protease transformed with an expression cassette providing for expression of a mutated high alkaline protease exhibiting altered protease activity in said host, whereby said mutated high alkaline protease is produced.

Please add the following new claims:

--27. A method of obtaining an alkalophilic *Bacillus* strain having no detectable extracellular high alkaline protease, said method comprising:

transforming an alkalophilic *Bacillus* strain with a cloning vector comprising the 5' and the 3' flanking regions but not the coding region of gene coding for the high alkaline protease and wherein a sufficient amount of said flanking regions is present to provide for illegitimate recombination with an indigenous gene coding for the high alkaline protease whereby transformants are obtained;

growing said transformants under conditions whereby the replication function encoded by said vector is inactivated; and